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Improvement of slums in the City.

* 270[a] *Q.*—SRI A. RATNAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Corporation of Madras submitted any revised programme of slum improvement which they had proposed to carry out, in the light of the provisions of the Madras Slum Improvement (Acquisition of Land) Act, 1954 ;

" (*b*) whether the Government consulted the Director of Harijan Welfare, and the Collector of Madras in the matter ; and

(*c*) whether any subsidy has been granted by the Union Government towards the scheme?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) No, Sir.

" (*b*) The question does not arise.

" (*c*) No, Sir."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, there are two aspects to this question. One is, according to the Madras Slum Improvement (Acquisition of Land) Act, 1954, the Corporation of Madras is expected to acquire the slums in the City of Madras. Apart from this, did not the Corporation submit a separate plan to the Government of Madras to improve the slums belonging to both Government and the Corporation and did not the Corporation approach the Government for a slice of money known as the grant-in-aid to improve the slums in the City of Madras? If so, what action did the Government take in the matter? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Commissioner of the Corporation has been asked to submit detailed proposals for drawing up a programme for acquisition of lands occupied by slums in the City. In pursuance of the provisions of the Madras Slum Improvement (Acquisition of Land) Act, 1954, which was passed recently, a comprehensive scheme for slum improvement prepared by the Corporation of Madras at an estimated cost of Rs. 4·19 crores has been forwarded to the Government of India and they have been requested to allot a block grant for this purpose."

SRI C. KANDASAMY :—" Sir, after the passing of the Slum Improvement Act of 1954, has any improvement been made so far in the City? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, slum improvement works are going on. The Corporation slums have been improved and ten of the slums on Government lands have also been improved. A comprehensive scheme has been prepared and it has been forwarded to the Government of India."

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[a] Question postponed from the list for 13th December 1954.

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SRI S. PAKKIRISWAMI PILLAI :—" How is it, Sir, that the Government are moving slowly in the matter, though the Slum Improvement Act was passed a year ago? Do not the Government feel that the improvement of the *cheris* is a burning question? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Act was passed only this year."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, does the much troublesome and long pending Appavu Nagar Railway feeder road matter come under this Slum Improvement Scheme? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" The hon. Member is not audible. What is it? "

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, Appavu Nagar is a slum in the City of Madras. The hon. Member Sri Balakrishnan is referring to that particular slum. So it is a pertinent question."

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" A separate question may be put."

SRI V. GOPALA GOUNDER :—" Sir, there are slums owned by private persons. Are the Government taking any action to improve these areas also at the cost of the Government? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Commissioner has been asked to include slums owned by private persons also."

SRI A. RATNAM :—" May I know, Sir, whether the amount allotted for the Slum Improvement Scheme has been spent and if so by whom? What were the measures taken and how many slums were improved? If not, why not? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Government of India have not sent their reply. I do not expect that they will give any grants but they will be prepared to give interest-bearing loans."

SRI S. DEIVASIGAMANY :—" Sir, do the Government mean by slum improvement the effacing of slums like Cox Cheri, or are they going to put up new buildings in the slum areas so as to house the people who have been living in those areas? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The hon. Member is not moving with the times. It is not called 'Cox Cheri' now. It has been renamed 'Cox Square.' (Laughter.) Only the other day the Hon. the Chief Minister opened forty tenements and the foundation-stone has been laid by the Hon. the Finance Minister for constructing another forty tenements."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, I invite your attention to the answers given by the Hon. the Minister for Health. While replying to the written question, the Hon. Minister said that the Corporation of Madras has not submitted any scheme for the improvement of slums. The answer to clause (*a*) of the main

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question was ' No, Sir '. Then subsequently when I put a supplementary question whether the Corporation did not submit a separate plan for the improvement of slums, the Hon. Minister replied that the Corporation has submitted a comprehensive scheme which has been forwarded to the Government of India? Sir, I wish to know which of the two answers is correct? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, the confusion is only in the mind of my hon. Friend. (Laughter.) Probably he is thinking of the next supplementary question. He is not listening to the answers which I have given."

SRI M. JAGANNATHAN :—" Sir, may I know how many slums have been shifted wholesale in the City of Madras under the Slum Improvement Scheme? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, the policy of the Government has been changed now. It is slum improvement and not slum clearance. While making improvement to slums, it may become necessary to provide for some of the dwellers elsewhere but most of them are re-housed in the same place after the necessary improvements have been effected."

SRI M. KALYANASUNDRAM :—" May I know, Sir, whether the Government will take steps to extend the provisions of this Act to other municipal towns also in the State? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" That will be considered in future. Let us see how the scheme works in the City."

Rehabilitation of Ceylon Indians.

* 300 *Q.*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state— 11-20 a.m.

(*a*) whether it is a fact that a large number of refugees from Ceylon are arriving within the territory of the Madras State ;

(*b*) if so, whether the Government have made any arrangements to rehabilitate them ;

(*c*) whether any proposals have been received from the Central Government in this regard ; and

(*d*) if so, what they are?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) By the term ' refugees ', the member apparently refers to Indians returning to India as a result of the Ceylon Government's Scheme to send away temporary residence permit holders. If so, the number of such Indians who have returned to India till now cannot be said to be large.

" (*b*) The Government are watching the situation. There is no need for rehabilitation at present. This question will be considered when the need arises.